SABBATH READING.

NON-POLITICAL: NON-SECTARIAN. "DETERMINED NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING AMONG YOU SAVE JESUS CHRIST."

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PATHWAYS THROUGH LIFE.

YOU say that your life is a failure,
Your future holds naught that is sweet,
That the troublesome years bring little but tears,
And always, always defeat.

Mistakes—aye, sins you should call them—
May cover your past like a pall,
But the soul that is strong to outlive its wrong
Is the bravest soul of all.

You long to go forth in the battle,
But your feet are fettered quite;
Remember, who serve in the corps of reserve
May be able as those who fight.

You chafe to enter the races,
For pleasure and gold and fame;
Yet many who win 'mid the plaudits' din
Find the prize but an empty name.

The toil that is yours seem fruitless,
Your days are weary and long;
But the lowliest duty may glow with beauty
When wrought with a cheerful song.

The world's best sweets are denied you,
You have tasted earth's cup of woe;
But who suffers to give that others may live
Has the noblest life, I trow.

Oh, let us, my friend, do bravely
The work that to us is given,
And smile in belief that what causes us grief
May keep us the closer to Heaven.

The pathways we traverse are many,
And some are by barrenest strand;
But with visions grown wide we shall wonder we sighed,
For they led to the Beautiful Land.

—*Ladies' Home Journal.* EMMA C. DOWN.

The Convict's Triumph.

"YOU have proved yourself to be a callous and cruel-hearted scoundrel, without a single redeeming feature in your character. You seem utterly incapable of comprehending the rights and privileges of law-abiding citizens, and reasonable punishments appear incapable of making any adequate impression upon you. You are a pest to society, and I feel that I should be seriously lacking in my judicial capacity were I to now inflict a less lengthy term of imprisonment upon you than the utmost the law allows."

Thus did the judge preface his sentence. And scarcely a soul in the court was moved by his stern condemnation. It seemed so natural to hear such words hurled at the head of a malefactor whose record testified to his apparent inability to live otherwise than by plunder. The bewigged counsel at the table gathered up their papers, and whispering exchanged bon-mots with each other; the twelve good men and true who had just delivered their finding sat imperturable in the box, looking as if they believed their acumen had enabled them to confer a great benefit on society; while the representatives of that society looked on with mingled curiosity and satisfaction. Not a single look of pity; not a vestige of regret. How could sympathy be felt with one who was a pest to society? Besides, he was nothing to them. And had he been, his life was such that none would have openly claimed the relationship. He was—it was to be hoped—without relatives. He might have friends, but the friends of such a man were not likely to be found within the precincts of a court of justice—at least, not as a mere spectator. People were not here to pity the wrong-doer. He whose heart was permitted to be touched into compassion by one guilty of crime, must have very absurd notions concerning the fitness of things.

And the prisoner stood in the dock, alone, friendless and uncared for. Throughout the trial his demeanor had been one of extreme indifference.

When the judge began his address to him, the words seemed to fall on deaf ears. It was only when the epithet, "a pest to society," was used to describe him, that the prisoner's hard, impassive countenance exhibited any change. But that change was electrical. Instantly his eyes opened to their fullest extent, became fixed for a moment on the face of the judge, and then drooped to the ground. It was then that the sea of faces before him became bewildering. He seemed desirous of shutting them from his sight, or of hiding himself from theirs. A perceptible tremor crossed his massive frame, and his hands twitched fidgetingly on the rail in front of him. Those words pierced his heart. Callous, crime-stained, shunned and hunted as he was, there was a remnant of self-respect even in his nature. And those words had roused it. "You are a pest to society!" The words surged through his whole being. Everything transpiring around him was obscured. He heard and saw nothing.

Then followed the sentence, but he did not hear it. A hand was laid upon his shoulder, but if he felt the grip, it had no effect upon him. The creaking of the dock gate, as it opened to permit his exit, seemed to echo the words applied to him. A dim moisture, which trembled in his eye, might have been taken for tears as the result of emotion, had it been natural for such as he to be capable of either. Mechanically he accompanied his jailer below, and, as he passed from the gaze of the crowd, a sigh of relief escaped him. On being left alone in his cell, he seated himself as if in contemplation, and then, resting his elbows on his knees, buried his face in his hands, and—the felon, the pest of society—wept. His mind wandered—wandered back into the past, until everything connected with it stood out clearly before him. He had hallowed memories—even he, the self-shipwrecked, the society-abandoned wretch, had remembrances of innocent times and circumstances. He had sat on a mother's knee, and his life had once been full of promise—the world had held out glorious prospects. They were unrealized, but they rushed before him now. He wept. The contrast between the past and his present—that of a pest to society—overwhelmed.

An hour or two afterwards, he was intruded upon. His jailer, having secured his wrists, requested the convict to follow him. Again he had to wait until certain formalities connected with his transference were gone through. Then, dazed and almost sightless, he was conducted into the street, and hurried into the hateful, sombre embrace of the Black Maria. His head was still bowed, and the jeers and sallies of a small knot of spectators without were lost upon him. A quick drive, and the railway station was reached. The prisoner was rushed into a compartment of the waiting train, and his guide seated himself at his side. Once or twice a passenger pressed for time, was about to get into the same carriage, but they drew back rapidly when they caught sight of the distorted face and manacled hands of the occupant. The train was heavily freighted, but everything was ready for departure at last.

The jailer looked at his companion. He was still absorbed in his thoughts, and manifested a desire to be left in sole possession of them. Taking out a paper, the representative of the law was speedily buried in its contents. Meanwhile, the train accelerated its speed, and was soon dashing along at a furious rate. It was an express, and had a journey of a hundred miles to run before a stopping place was reached. An hour passed. The jailer's paper became monotonous. He laid it aside, and endeavored to draw his prisoner into conversation.

"You seem mighty studious," said he. But there was no reply.

"Thinking of the arrangements for your reception, eh?" and he smiled jocularly. "Well, it ain't everyone who has the privilege of having his board and lodging paid for."

Still the prisoner was silent, and shrank farther into his corner.

"The judge has given you a thumper this time, anyway," continued the officer, "and I am not sorry it's you instead of me. But, then, if men won't go straight, it's their own fault if they're bagged, and they might as well take what's given 'em with a good grace. You're thinking of the past, p'r'aps, and——"

"And of the present," murmured the prisoner.

"Well, ten years ain't——"

"And of what the judge said. Do you know what I am?" and the dejected man became animated and flung himself into an upright position. "I am a pest to society," he continued. "A pest, without the possibility of becoming anything else."

"You don't mean to say that you have any desire of amendment?" in genuine surprise.

"Amendment! If I could wash out

that title with my life's blood, I'd do it. I would give the remainder of my life for the opportunity of becoming something other than—than what I am."

"Well, s'help me! If you'd only thought of that six months earlier, my hearty—but, great Scott! what's the matter with the train? We're driving along at a terrible rate."

And they were. The oscillation caused the passengers much discomfiture, and several heads were thrust out of the windows to ascertain if anything were wrong, amongst them that of the officer in charge of the prisoner. For some time nothing ususual was discernible. Then the jailer pulled his head into the carriage.

"If that signal we've just passed wasn't against us, I'm a Dutchman." he said. "I could have sworn that it was at right angles, and—did you see that? The man in that cabin we've just flown past was waving a red flag and dancing about as if to attract attention. I hope all's right. No, no, sit down, now. It's against the rules for you to lean out of the window; you might—fall out, you know."

"Something is certainly wrong," said the prisoner. "That's the guard's brake—don't you hear it?"

The brake was undoubtedly at work, but it made very little impression on the flying train. Again the officer peered out of the window, but the engine at that moment dashed into a tunnel, and nothing could be discerned. A consciousness of impending disaster seemed to seize upon prisoner and guard alike, and the black darkness of the tunnel added to their disquiet. Their hearts beat with excitement. As soon as they emerged into daylight, heads were thrust out of the carriages the entire length of the train, and anxiety was pictured in each. What could be the matter?

Every one was evidently convinced something was seriously wrong, and the uncertainty as to what it might be added to their fears. Then another cabin was passed. The guard's brake was still on, and seethed and hissed against the wheels, while sparks, consequent upon friction, were scattered under the carriage in a shower. There could be no doubt now that the living freight was in peril, and threatened with disaster. The man in the cabin was distinctly seen to be gesticulating wildly as the train rushed by.

The officer set rules at defiance now. The prisoner was at the window with him, leaning heavily upon him, in order to ascertain, if possible what was going on. Just then a curve in the line enabled them to obtain a clear view of the engine.

"Great heavens!" said the officer, aghast, "look—look—see that! The driver and fireman are engaged in a desperate struggle, and—we are lost!"

"We have already neglected the signals against us," said his companion. "There is something ahead of us, and those two madmen seem oblivious everything save the avenging of their own fancied wrongs."

"What is to be done? There will be a wholesale massacre, unless—There, see, they have thrown each other on to the track!"

Every eye peering from the windows of the heavily-laden train had seen the struggle in which the responsible beings on the engine were engaged. At its termination in this horribly fatal manner, scream after scream rent the air. Women hurriedly withdrew into the carriages, and sank fainting upon the seats, while the faces of strong men were blanched with fear and distorted by agony, as they contemplated the fate which awaited them.

"The train must be stopped, and—at once," said the convict. "We must be going at the rate of sixty miles an hour. In ten minutes we shall be at Pemberton Junction. It is there the danger lies, if I mistake not, and—"

"Man, you must be mad! Stop the train! Impossible. Did you not see those two fellows fall headlong on to the track? Who then can swing back the levers?"

"I can."

"You! Impossible. Ah, you see in this a possible chance of escaping."

"I do, but not from justice. Unfetter my hands, quick; we have not a moment to lose."

"You must be mad!"

"And if I am, what matter, so that I save the lives of these hundreds of passengers? Quick, release my hands."

"What do you intend doing? You will not escape?"

"Release me. Every moment is precious. I am strong. I have the courage of a lion, and the determination of a regiment. I will climb to the top of our carriage and crawl along until I come to the engine. Quick. I—"

"You will not attempt to escape if you succeed?"

"I shall escape from being a pest to society. I would willingly shed my life's blood to accomplish this purpose. The opportunity is before me. Strike these horrible chains from my wrists, and let me seize it. If I perish, I shall die happy in the thought that there will be some who will not think me a—what I have been described. If you think me capable of honor, I pass you my word that I will give myself again into your charge the instant my mission is accomplished."

The officer looked into the face of his prisoner for a moment. A flush of excitement set on his cheeks, and his lips were tightly compressed.

"You are a brave man," said he, "and I'll trust you."

The next moment the manacles were laid on the seat.

"Thanks for giving me the opportunity, at least," said the prisoner, seizing his jailer's hand. "If—if anything happens, remember that I made an attempt to retrieve something of my past," and opening the carriage door, he took a firm hold of the rail and began his perilous task.

The train seemed to be increasing its speed every moment, and the swaying carriage rendered his attempt one of extreme danger. A few seconds, and with cat-like agility he reached the roof of the carriage. Then he was lost to sight. The affrighted passengers who had witnessed his coolness sent up a faint cheer of encouragement as they realized his intention. As the train rounded the various curves, they ran first to one window and then to the other, craning their necks in vain endeavors to watch the brave fellow's progress. Once only was he seen and then a shudder passed through all who beheld him. It was when in attempting to cross from one carriage to another his foot slipped, and he would have fallen to instant death had he not happily succeeded in clinging to the beading.

A moment for recovery, then he safely climbed to the roof and pursued his dangerous way. A few minutes elapsed—minutes which seemed like hours to the terrified passengers breathlessly awaiting the result of his courage. Then they hissed their w
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Once more all heads wer
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God!" ran the length of the
down train had also been
within a few yards of them.
alighting, a rush was instantly mad
the engine. With tears of gratitude
coursing down their cheeks, each was
anxious to shake the hand of the brave
man who had saved them. But what a
sad spectacle awaited them! Half laid,
half reclining on the tender, with the
lever still grasped tenaciously in his
hand, they found the convict deluged in
blood. He was not dead, but consciousness had not remained long enough for
him to witness the success of his noble
act. Evidently, in passing through the
tunnel, he had been leaning over the engine, and his head had come in contact
with the coping. Grateful hands released him, and bore him tenderly to the
station, where medical aid was soon
forthcoming. But, poor fellow, he was
past it!

"No, no," he murmured, "don't disturb me. I—I'm—very comfortable, and—and—you can do—me no good. I—I—want to lie here and—and dwell for a moment—on—the fact—that—the—judge—was wrong."

And even in death there seemed a consciousness of it. His lips were parted in a smile, and a triumphant expression sat upon his face.—Woman's Voice.

Honesty In Prayer.

OUR Prayers should be frequently examined to see whether we are asking for what we really want, or only for the things we have an idea we ought to want. There is too much of this unreality and practical dishonesty current both in the closet and the public prayer room. People sometimes get into quite a glow of pleasurable devotional excitement as they pray; their imagination works finely, they have a good flow of language, and become somewhat heated with their own rhetoric, and as the fine phrases roll trippingly off the tongue they ask for things which they would not only be much astonished to receive, but actually sorry, in their cooler moments, to get. What we sincerely desire, we shall be willing to pay the price for; and there is always a price attached—that is, a condition. If we want to sit on the right hand of Jesus, we must be willing to drink of His cup. There is much more of poetry than of piety in some prayers. They sound well but the Lord, who knows the heart, does not find satisfaction in them. "Lip prayers are lost prayers." "Don't pray cream, and live skim-milk."—Zion's Herald.

FIDELITY to the Present—Keep close to duty. Never mind the future, if only you have peace of conscience; if you feel yourself reconciled, and in harmony with the order of things. Be what you ought to be; the rest is God's affair. It is for Him to know what is best.—Henri Frederic Amiel.

...RS AND SISTERS.

...OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY ...MARRIED," ETC.

...ld is much to be pitied, ...n there is in a family ...boy and a girl they are ...ter off. The boy is liable to ...nd the girl thinks little of a ...who does not care for dolls. ...mily, then, should consist of ...ar children at least, and if a ...re thrown in so much the bet... and girls help and improve ...r. The former acquire some... their sisters' delicacy and tact, ...e latter learn from their brothers ...reliance and independence.

An ideal brother considers himself the protector of his sisters. He does not make them fetch and carry, and speak of them as "only girls." He is careful to whom he introdnces them, and respects all women for their sake.

In a poem called "Brother and Sister," the lady who wrote under the name of "George Eliot," recalling the years of childhood spent with her brother, tells of his gentleness and youthful devotion, and makes this prophecy regarding his future:

> His years with others must the sweeter be,
> For those brief days he spent in loving me.

So it is always. He who acts well the part of a brother fits himself to be a good friend, a good husband, a good father, a good citizen.

But though brothers should admire and love their sisters, they need not be blind to their faults and weaknesses. "So you are going to be married," said a cynical young man to his friend. "Yes, very soon." "Of course, you think her an angel?" "Oh, no; I have four sisters!"

A little bracing criticism from brothers and sisters may do good, but we protest against the cynical spirit that prevails in some families. Here everyone has a nickname, and the slightest enthusiasm is snubbed, so that brothers and sisters, instead of telling each other their aspirations and ambitions, have to seek for confidants away from home.

We all know that there are specks on the sun. Well, one evening at the time when a new one appeared, a gentleman called upon an astronomer. "What a fine day we have had!" said the visitor; "I have seldom seen the sun so bright." The astonomer looked puzzled, and said, "Though I have been looking at the sun all day, I never noticed whether it was bright or not. I was so interested in that new speck which has appeared, that I didn't see anything else; and, really, until you spoke, my idea of the sun had been that it was rather dark!"

Too many brothers and sisters are like this astronomer. They see nothing in each other but specks, and are quite surprised when other young men fall in love with their sisters, and other young ladies consider their brothers heroes. When those who are brought up in the same home are in this way cold and carping, disunited, and generally unloving, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be found that their parents did not love each other. Parental love is the bond of peace and of all virtues in the family. A home without love is no more a home than a body without a soul is a man. Hannibal is said to have overcome obstacles when crossing the Alps by pouring vinegar on them; but it is not in this way we are to attempt to get through domestic difficulties.

Happy thought—a vocation! Eva: "I suppose those extremely nice-looking young men are the students, or house-surgeons, or something." Maud: "No doubt. Do you know, Eva, I feel I should very much like to be a hospital nurse." Eva: "How strange! Why the very same idea has just occurred to me." In this way Mr. Punch lately ridiculed the rather mixed motives which sometimes induce ladies to become nursing sisters. Anything to get out of the humdrum round of commonplace duty into a more "interesting" sphere. To be a nursing sister is considered more heroic than to be a good real sister, and there is nothing sensational or exciting in being a good daughter.

And yet we ought never to go out of our way to look for duties, but should start with what lies nearest. Before thinking of becoming nursing sisters, girls should be sure that this will not cause them to neglect any of the duties of real sisterhood. How very important are these duties! Sisters can do a great deal of good in influencing their younger brothers and sisters. The little ones are more free in talk and manner with them than they are with older people, and so they have opportunities with them which do not belong even to their mothers.

Three schoolboys from Eton, Harrow, and Winchester, were lately in a room together when a lady entered. The Eton boy asked languidly ought not some fellow to give a chair to the lady, the Harrow boy went slowly and fetched one, and the Winchester boy deliberately sat down upon it. Either these boys had no sisters or else these sisters neglected the duty of instilling into them manners and reverence for womanhood. Young men are exposed to many temptations. It is well for them when they have sisters who make home so pleasant, especially in the evenings, that they do not seek for dangerous pleasure outside. We are far from thinking that sisters should fetch and carry for their brothers, for nothing could injure young men more. They ought, however, to be as unlike as possible those who begrudge every gracious word and act given in their own homes, but who are enthusiastic and charming when they meet gentlemen outside them. Sister! be willing to resign that attractive book and play a duet with your elder brother. Try that game with the last born child in the family, even though you have to leave aside your letter-writing for a few moments. In the golden years of his youth you can by such acts knit the soul of the boy to yours for all time.

There are almost as many famous sisters as famous wives—that is to say, sisters who have been instrumental in making their brothers great. Out of many that might be named we mention two: Caroline Herschel and Dorothy Wordsworth.

When an only brother who has been all his life the companion and adviser of an only sister marries, it is sometimes a heavy blow to that sister. This is a great testing time. If she be unworthy of the name of a sister, she will try to prevent the event merely for selfish reasons, or, if she cannot do this, will vent her disappointment upon her sister-in-law. Not so a true sister. Forgetting self, she only asks, "Will this marriage make my brother happier?" If she has reason to suppose that it will, she takes his wife not as a sister-in-law only, but in reality. The selfish plan often entails the practical loss of a brother, but that which is unselfish wins his gratitude and the warm friendship of his wife.

Some of our readers have neither brothers nor sisters, or if they have they are separated from them by space or the circumstances of their lives: let these remember that there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; in a way that no earthly brother can or would, Jesus Christ upholds and comforts us.

When one man behaves in a hard, grudging way towards another, it is sometimes said that he is "coming the elder brother over him." The allusion is to the parable of the prodigal son, where the elder brother was annoyed because the younger son, the returned prodigal, was generously treated. King David when a youth had also experience of elder-brotherly bitterness.

Nothing could be more human and natural than the picture given in the New Testament of the sisters Martha and Mary and the brother Lazarus in their home at Bethany. All three loved each other, though the active bustling Martha did not understand the contemplative nature of Mary. But, however they differed in other respects, they agreed in loving Jesus, and this became the greatest bond of union between them.

It is so now. When Christ comes into a home, He attunes its life into harmony with His own Spirit. He teaches courtesy, forbearance, and sacrifice; He unites brothers and sisters on earth to each other by first uniting them to their Father in Heaven.—The Quiver.

"THE WORK OF OUR HANDS."

"THE work of our hands, establish Thou it." I read the words over and over again, going back a little. "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and the work of our hands, establish Thou it."

"The work of my hands day by day," I said almost scornfully, as I thought of the homely work my hands had to do—the cooking, the housework, the patching, the mending, the rough, hard work I sometimes had to put them to. And I smiled as I thought of such work being established forever. I smiled again almost bitterly as I thought, "It is established that my hands must work—if not forever, for all earthly time."

"Please comb my hair now mamma; the first bell is ringing," and Neddie tapped my hand with his comb.

I patted and smoothed my boy's tangled locks. "The work of my hands," I said and turned up my boy's face to kiss his lips as he went to school. I turned to the sitting-room, drew up the shades in the bay-window, so my few geraniumns, might have all the sun's rays they could, shook down the coal in the stove, dusted the chairs, straightened out the table cover and books, and brushed the shreds from the carpet, sighing a little over the thin places that the best arrangement of mat could not quite cover. The rooms looked neat and tidy. "The work of my hands," I repeated mechanically. Just then the sun shone out bright. It lit up my room like a kind smile. "The beauty of the Lord, our God," I repeated softly.

I went to homely work in the kitchen. Patiently, I tried to go through my every-day routine of duty. For I said to myself, "If this is always to be the work of my hands, surely I must let the beauty of my Lord rest upon it."

"You look very bright to-night wife," said Will, when he came in after his day's work. Has it been an easy day?"

I thought of the cooking and ironing, of my tired hands and feet, and smiled as I said, "I had a good text this morning."—American Baptist Flag.

THE JEWS IN PALESTINE AND SYRIA.

BY REV. H. H. JESSUP, D. D., BEIRUT, SYRIA.

THE question is constantly asked of one returning from Syria to the United States: What is the number of Jews in Syria and Palestine? Is it true that they are flocking back by thousands and tens of thousands to the land of their fathers, and that soon they will take possession of Canaan, restore their kingdom, and rebuild their temple?

Let us look at the facts in the case, and try to consider them impartially.

The only way to obtain accurate statistics in Palestine with regard to any particular sect is through the religious heads of the sects. The Ottoman government has made repeated attempts to obtain an accurate census, but finds it difficult excepting in the case of the Mohammedans, whose male offspring are carefully registered at their birth on the military conscription lists. The other sects notoriously evade the census-takers, and give false reports in order to escape taxation. Very stringest regulations have now been adopted by the Ottoman officials, and by another decade they will probably have a fairly correct census.

Owing to the conflicting and exaggerated reports prevailing in Europe and America with regard to the Jews in Palestine, Her British Majesty's Consul in Jerusalem, Mr. J. Dickson, a most conscientious and worthy man in every respect, and Rev. Selah Merrill, D. D., United States Consul in Jerusalem, made careful and independent investigation in the year 1891 as to the numbers and location of the Jews. Dr. Merrill is too well known to need any word of introduction or praise.

After several months of searching every possible source of information, they arrived at substantially the same result, viz.:

Jews in Jerusalem	25,000 to 27,000
" Jaffa	2,700
" Ramleh	166
" Hebron	1,200
" Nablus	99
" Tiberias	2,900
" Safed	6,126
" Acre	200
" Haifa	1,640
" all the colonies, less than	3,000
Total	45,031

These statistics cover Palestine proper. There are Jews in Damascus, Beirut, and Aleppo (in Syria proper), numbering some 23,000 in all. The Jews of Aleppo and Damascus have lived there from time immemorial and of all them speak the Arabic language as their vernacular. In Beirut is a small Jewish population, Arabic-speaking, largely connected with the families of Damascus and Aleppo. More recently Jewish merchants have come in from Vienna Germany, who deal in clothing and are bankers and merchants, speaking the European languages. They are lax and liberal in their Jewish ideas, and some of them keep open shops on Saturdays.

The Jews of Palestine proper are largely supported by the European rubbis' fund, receiving house rent and weekly rations from the common fund, and are thus encouraged in habits of idleness. No better means could be devised to demoralize and degrade a people than to support them from a charity fund. The Jews in Europe have a tender sympathy for "the poor saints in Jerusalem," and are taking the very best way to keep them poor and make them poorer.

The Rothschild colonies are conducted on the same pauperizing system. An intelligent observer visited the new Jewish colony on the coast near the ancient Cesarea. Each colonist receives land, a house, furniture, agricultural implements, and household utensils free, and a daily allowance of at least one franc per head. Our friend the visitor found the Jews living at ease in their houses on one-half of the allowance, and with the other half hiring the Arabs to do all the work. This was largely the case with other colonies, so that Rothschild's agent indignantly declined to continue the allowance, excepting as wages paid for work actually performed. I visited two of the colonies in May, 1893, one on the west bank of the Jordan, at the Jisr Binat Yakob, north of the Sea of Galilee, and the other on the southwestern shore of the waters of Merom.

The first-named was an unthrifty and forlorn affair. The colonists looked sickly and dejected. The houses were built of boards, poorly suited to that hot valley, and their gardens were overgrown with weeds. Several houses had just been begun, and they had been forbidden finishing them by the interference of the Turkish government in Safed. The colony at Lake Merom has a splendid agricultural site, a level plot of hundreds of acres of deep, rich soil; but, alas! it is on the margin of the most pestilential marsh in Palestine. The Greek and Protestant villagers of Merj Aiyun, ten miles north of Merom, live on the hills, but are obliged to go down to the Huleh (Merom) to sow and harvest their crops; and it is notorious, that almost without exception, they all return home with chills and fever. The Jewish colonists at Merom are superior to those at the Jisr, and have beautiful plantations of roses and fruit trees, but they are surrounded by a poisonous atmosphere, and their neighbors south and east are the wild Arabs, Druses and Circassians.

The whole impression made upon an observer with regard to these Jewish colonies is that they are forced, unnatural, and of doubtful success. The pauperizing system which has made Jerusalem a great almshouse, tends to demoralize the whole system of Palestine colonization. The entire scheme seems to be a kind of fad, which is being pursued with a special object, having none of the elements which made the old Phœnecian colonies and modern Anglo-Saxon colonies successful.—Missionary Review of the World.

SECRET SINS WILL COME TO THE SURFACE SOME TIME.

THE inner life may be likened to a seething cauldron whose contents are hidden by the commotion of boiling and steam, but whose dregs will at last be forced to the surface. This applies particularly to persons with secret sins, for example, self-indulgence, licentiousness, for "whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap." Fire will reveal every man's life; it may come early and it may come late, but it is the law of life. It may be likened to Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde; you can choke Mr. Hyde, down, but he is bound to be given play until he is disclosed.—Rev. Charles E. Robinson, Presbyterian, Scranton, Pa., in the Pulpit.

Do not look forward to what may happen to-morrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you to-day will care for you to-morrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.—Francis de Sales.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF C[illegible]

TOPIC FOR JAN[illegible]

PRAYER—HOW TO USE A[illegible]—Luke 1: 14.

Strange promises are given to tho[illegible] faith.

"All things whatsoever y[illegible] prayer, believing, ye shall[illegible] Matt. 21: 22. "What things so[illegible] desire, when ye pray, believe that [illegible] ceive them, and ye shall have them."—Mark 11: 24. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."—John 16: 24.

We must pray with perseverance and insistance.

"I have cried day and night before Thee."—Psa. 88: 1. "Evening, and morning, and at noon will I pray."—Psa. 55: 17. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—Matt. 7: 7. "Pray without ceasing."—1 Thess. 5: 17. "He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."—Luke 18: 1. "Who, in the days of His flesh * * * offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears."—Heb. 5: 7. "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."—Luke 6: 12.

We should pray for pardon and strength.

"Pardon mine iniquity for it is great."—Psa. 25: 11. "Blot out my transgressions, hide Thy face from my sins."—Psa. 51: 1, 9. "O turn unto me * * * have mercy upon me; give Thy strength unto Thy servant."—Psa. 86: 16.

That we may be thoroughly cleansed and sanctified.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."—Psa. 51: 10. "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults."—Psa. 19: 12. "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."—Psa. 51: 11. "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."—John 17: 17.

That God's way may be made plain to us.

"Shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee."—Ex. 33: 13. "Lead me in Thy truth."—Psa. 25: 5. "Make me to understand the way of Thy precepts. Teach me good judgment."—Psa. 119: 27, 66. "Not my will, but Thine be done."—Luke 22: 42.

We should pray for others.

"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy."—Phil. 1: 4. "We pray always for you * * * that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him."—2 Thess. 1: 11, 12. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one."—John 17: 20.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel and all around us seems to lower
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,

not always strong—
rborne with care—
eak or heartless be,
—when with us is prayer,
n, and courage are with
—French.

Prayer is a specific and
to us in prayer. The
"Thy will be done." Christ
this form of prayer, what
should be. Some one has
prayers may be the means
us—because of their dead
felt phraseology. At times
is to be feared—no harm in
it—that our prayers are like our
lean, and without enough of heart
them. The Bible tells us that we often
sk amiss in seeking things for ourselves.
ow, the way to have answered prayers
to pray oftener and more earnestly for
hers. Less of self in our prayers even.
many things more deeply concerned
about the homes and sufferings of others
than about our own. That was Christ's
way, and it brings joys and blessings to
all those who are in that frame of mind.

Moody has it about right when he says "Answer your own prayers." First let us all as co-workers with God do what He tells us to do. This kind of doing is itself a prayer. You recall that prayer of the Zebedee family who wanted comfortable, honored places with Christ on His throne. The Saviour didn't commend that petition. How could He? He hadn't where to lay His head, that others might have good pillows here and mansions beyond. When we go to the throne of grace then let us bethink ourselves. God knows what we need before we ask, and what others need. A rich man at ease, with a surplus, prays but doesn't remember the potatoes needed by the widow and her children. Prayers are well offered that are preceded by alms. God says so. "Thy prayers and thine alms have come up before Me." A man with grudges against his fellow creatures prays in a way, but is wholly ignorant of the essential conditions of prayer. Heaven says to such—and there is a big crowd of them—take away your offering and don't bring it back until you are reconciled with your brother. No one can love God or have Him for a friend who hates his brother. Those are the terms. Will you yield? Will you make it up?

The prayers of the Bible are numerous and brief. Here is one which can be effectively used in building character. "Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Thy spirit is good. Lead me into the land of uprightness." If you don't like this one as well as some others, pick one out for yourself and carry it with you as a stand-by through 1896. These are real charms—sprinkled blood on the door posts of your heart and home. When the angels of God find these charms worn, they'll encamp round thee. Study God's desires and Christ's for this suffering world of ours, and make them our desires in prayer and act. Let us be one with God in our prayers and work. What is His will? Make sure of that. None of self in the closet, but all of Thee. None of self anywhere.

For Sabbath Reading.

EPWORTH LEAGUE TOPIC for JANUARY 5.

A RESOLUTION AND A PRAYER—FIRST CLAUSE OF THE EPWORTH LEAGUE PLEDGE.—Eph. 4: 13.

By George Matile Dougall.

The first clause of the League pledge reads thus: "I will earnestly seek for myself and do what I can to help others attain the highest New Testament standard of experience and life."

We have been considering the religious experiences and life of the early Church with a view to being the better able to bring both our own lives and those of others more nearly into accord with the New Testament standard.

In thus studying the history of the early Church we have seen Christ as mirrored in the lives of His holy apostles and saints. Peter, Paul, Barnabas and Stephen have been set before us as notable and noble examples of what men may become through the power of the life of Christ in them, and we certainly ought to have a better comprehension and a fuller realization of what it means to be a Christian for the study of some of their doings and sayings. If we have not been made better we have been made worse. For no man may read the Bible without coming face to face with God and either submitting to God's authority or rejecting it. The man who reads the Bible reads either to salvation or condemnation. Let us consider this in all our dealings with "The Book," and ever seek to make our study of it more reverent.

In these records of the early Church we have seen that the saints of old, like those of the present day were subject to weaknesses and imperfections, but their failures have only served to bring into greater prominence the truth that the weak and the sinful may attain to great power and holiness by linking their lives with that of Christ. But now we turn to look at the Master Himself, who was the real founder of the Church, and from whom the Church has derived all its virtue.

In Him was no sin nor any imperfection and the study of His character leads us to the greatest heights. In Him we see "the highest New Testament standard of experience and life." If any think it an easy thing to attain this standard, or that all one's energies need not be enlisted in the task, let them hear what Paul says: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3: 13.) And in another place he urges us to "lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us," and to "run with patience the race set before us."

Let us then resolve firmly, and, as Barnabas expressed it, "with purpose of heart" that we will "cleave unto the Lord," "striving according to His working who worketh in me mightily," until, in the words of our text, "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." So shall we fulfil all our pledges.

In fine, "the highest New Testament standard of experience" can only be attained by keeping constantly before us the perfect pattern which Christ has set for us and making the attainment of that standard the one absorbing purpose of our lives—God helps those who help themselves, and others.

Every kindness done to others is a step nearer to the life of Christ.—*Dean Stanley.*

The best way to help others to attain to the "highest standard of experience" is to climb the mountain ourselves, holding tightly the hand of our Guide, and as we get up tell others of the way by which He has led us and of the mighty power with which He has helped us.

Morals That Are Often Cracked Will Break at Last.

THAT was a wise as well as truthful child who made the confession: "I don't remember breaking any of the Commandments, but I am afraid I cracked some of them." It needs a certain amount of courage openly to violate a law, human or divine, but the little deeds and courses of conduct that are almost and yet not quite a violation, are as easy as the spirit that takes refuge in them is cowardly. The life of many professors of religion is scored with the subtle fractures that result from little sins, like tempers, little acts of insincerity, and selfishness. It is possible to crack a costly vase so finely that it cannot be noticed by the closest scrutiny; but let this be done again and again in different directions, and some day the vessel will suddenly fall to pieces at a touch, and without a sound.

When we hear of some one who has had a lifelong reputation for good character and consistent living, suddenly falling into shameful sin, we are shocked and scandalized, and puzzled. If we knew all, we should find that the fall has only been sudden in its manifestations; right away back in the life there are a thousand "cracked" Commandments, and the final public exposure is but the falling of the vase to pieces, whose beauty has long been a lie and a pretence.

This is unquestionably the prime lesson we should learn from the exposure and punishment of Jabez Balfour. His fall, at the time when the "Liberator" exposures took place, was a problem to many. We now see the meaning of it all. By reading the evidence at the trial just concluded, we can see how his career was a slow but sure descent into evil; one fraud leading to another insensibly, till at last the edifice of wrong which he had reared with such amazing skill, toppled over like a castle of cards. He cracked one and another of the Commandments, and at last he broke them, and made others break them, and they involved one another in a common ruin and shame, which has now been brought home.—London Christian.

For Sabbath Reading.

Sabbath-School Lesson.

LESSON 1.....JANUARY 5, 1896.

THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.—Luke 1: 5-17.

By JOHN R. WHITNEY.

FOR the next six months our studies will be in "The Gospel according to St. Luke." He also wrote "the Acts of the Apostles." In his "Gospel" narrative he tells us of what "Jesus began both to do and teach," Himself during his early life, a period of about thirty-three years. In "The Acts" he tells us of what Jesus continued to do and teach by the hand of others for nearly thirty-three years more.

St. Luke himself was not a Jew by birth, but was probably a proselyte to the Jewish faith long before he became a convert to Christianity. It is supposed that he was born in Antioch in Syria, the place where the disciples were first called Christians. Possibly he was living there when Paul and Barnabas visited the place and preached the Gospel. By occupation he was a physician, and, from the style of his writings, it is evident that he was a highly-educated man. From the use of the pronoun "we," in Acts 16: 10, it appears that he had joined Paul's company somewhere on his second missionary journey, and was with him at Troas. From that time he seems to have been not only his fellow-traveler and often his fellow-sufferer, but also his fellow-laborer greatly beloved. (Col. 4: 14; Acts 28: 16; 2 Tim. 4: 11.)

It is generally considered that he wrote his "Gospel," and probably a large part of "the Acts," under St. Paul's direction and from material which he largely furnished. His "Gospel" therefore has very much in it, that reminds us of St. Paul's great distinctive doctrine of justification by faith. Whilst St. Matthew wrote especially for the benefit of Jewish readers, and dwelt on the fulfillment of prophecy, and whilst Mark wrote for the benefit of Roman converts and dwelt on the display of divine power in Jesus of Nazareth, Luke wrote to the great Gentile world to converts among all nations, and in his narrative he dwells particularly on the divine compassion and love of Jesus. "As Paul led the people of the Lord out of the bondage of the law into the enjoyment of Gospel liberty, so did Luke raise sacred history from the standpoint of the Israelitish nationality, to the higher and holier ground of universal humanity." (Slange.)

Compared with the other Gospel narratives, St. Luke's is generally much fuller in little details than any of the others. His style of writing is very much like that of many modern writers of history who have not only recorded facts, but who have actually visited the places where their incidents occurred and conversed with those who were directly or indirectly connected with them. When he wrote, many of those familiar with the incidents he narrates, were still alive and it is evident that he gathered very much from actual conversation with them. Thus when he tells us about Zacharias, and Elizabeth, and Mary, and John the Baptist, and Simeon, and Anna, the prophetess, and many others, he not only records the events in which they took a prominent part, and of which no other evangelist makes any mention whatever, but he also tells us just how they felt and what they said, just such details as would be gathered and made impressive by a personal interview with them or with their intimate friends and neighbors.

But whilst his facts may thus have been largely gathered from "eye witnesses" (1: 2) he does not record all the facts connected with Jesus' ministry on earth any more than the other evangelists; neither does he always record them in the same order. Although he tells us more of the early history of Jesus than any other writer, yet he does not by any means give us a complete biography. In fact none of the evangelists give us the life of Jesus, they only give us a few glimpses of the work of Jesus. This is a very remarkable fact. For its fuller unfolding see lesson of July 1, 1894. If He had been a mere man who made a great impression, not only upon the time in which he lived, but upon all subsequent time—a great man, like any of the heroes, or statesmen, or orators. or scientists, or philanthropists of earth this could not possibly have happened. The demand for a record of the life of such a man as a stimulant and example for all other men, would have been so great that a host of authors would have sprung up who would have searched out and recorded every detail from the manger to the Cross. But because he was not in any sense such a man, but far above all such men, even the great representative man, "the second Adam," and, as the angel declared Him to be in our Christmas lesson, "a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"; therefore it was necessary to record only such facts as proved that He met every demand of God's Law upon sinful man, that He might "redeem them that were under the Law." (Gal. 4: 5.)

HIS WORK WAS THAT OF THE REDEEMER OF MEN.

The record of that work in the Gospel narratives was not, therefore, given as a stimulant for a noble ambition, or as an example for high and holy conduct, but it was given that the eye of faith might see Him as the Saviour of sinners. "These were written," the inspired historian says, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, ye might have life through His name." (John 20: 31.) But when the poor sinner, seeing himself guilty and condemned before God, and longing to be delivered from his sins, believes this, then it becomes the grandest stimulant and example that the world has ever known, and it has made the greatest men that have ever lived.

In this connection, it is worthy of special notice that all of the Evangelists begin their narratives with a more or less full account of John the Baptist, before they say much about Jesus of Nazareth. St. Matthew tells us very briefly of the promise of Jesus' birth and of its fulfillment, and then he omits every incident in His life for thirty years until after he has described the coming and the preaching of John the Baptist. St. Mark begins his narrative with the declaration that "the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," is identified with the ministry of John the Baptist. He speaks quite fully of that before he says a word about Jesus. St. John, in rapt vision looking into the past eternity, declares that, "In the beginning was the Word * * * In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." But he immediately adds as essential to the operation of this "Life," and "Light," that "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness to the Light." (John 1: 6, 7.)

St. Luke, however, enters into more particulars concerning John than any of the others. He tells us [illegible] his birth, of the purpose [illegible] place he should occupy [illegible] of redemption.

The Promise.—Zacharia[illegible] the father and mother of J[illegible] lineal descendents of the [illegible] Aaron. They were at this [illegible] vanced in age and childless. [illegible] in "the hill country" of Ju[illegible] but the name of the city, whet[illegible] or Suttah, or some other place [illegible] nitely known. Being a prie[illegible] longing to the eighth course o[illegible] ty-four appointed by King Da[illegible] Temple service (1 Chron. 24: [illegible] Chron. 8: 14), at regular intervals [illegible] his duty to repair to Jerusalem. Th[illegible] he remained for a week. (Slange.) In the performance of his priestly duties, he daily went into the Holy Place of the Temple to offer incense upon the altar, every morning when he trimmed the lamps and every evening when he lit them. (Ex. 30: 7, 8.) With him this was no mere perfunctory service, for he was a devout man—"walking in all the Commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." He was evidently such an one as the aged Simeon—"waiting for the consolation of Israel." (2: 25.) As he burnt the sweet-smelling incense, and offered prayer, in behalf of all the people, his own personal prayers went up also as a sweet odor before God.

It is evident that he had long before given up all expectation of having a child of his own, but he had not given up an earnest longing for the promised seed who should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3: 15), and who should make intercession for His people. (Isa. 53: 12.) As he prayed that God would "perform the mercy promised" to the fathers, and "remember the oath which He sware to Abraham" (vv. 72, 73), the Angel Gabriel suddenly stood at his side, and assured him that his prayer was heard. And not only so, but that he himself should have a child, who should "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (v. 17.)

This promise was so wonderful, and it involved so much to him and to all his people that it completely staggered his faith, although it was an answer to his own prayer. He could not comprehend it, therefore he could not believe it. This is always the way with sinful men, even the best of them. God's answers to prayer are always so full, and so wonderful, that they cannot understand them.

Bewildered and fearful, Zacharias doubtingly asked of the angel, who had come from the very presence of God to tell him that his prayer had been heard, "Whereby shall I know this?" Because he doubted, his lips were at once sealed. He could ask no more questions. For nearly a year he sat in silence. But it was a time of holy meditation and communion with God; a time in which the promise grew larger and larger in its fulness, and became better and better understood. When it was fulfilled, and a writing table was brought to him that he might name the new-born child, he had no name to give it. It was already named. God alone could name His Prophet, as He alone could name His Son. The one He called John—the other Jesus. And so the glad father wrote with emphasis, and without hesitation, "His name is John"—"the grace, gift or mercy of the Lord." (Cruden.)

As soon as he had written this, his lips were unsealed, and, filled with the Holy Ghost, he began to sing the hymn of praise which the church has ever since called "The Benedictus."

…the God of Israel;
…and wrought redemption
…a horn of salvation for us
…is servant David.
…ild, shalt be called the Proph-
…t High:
…o before the face of the Lord to
… His ways;
…edge of salvation unto His peo-
…on of their sins.

(vv. 68-79. R. V.)

…POSE.—Thus the Angel Ga-…acharias that he should not …a son himself, but that his son … the forerunner of the long-…or Messiah. This was to be the … purpose for which he should be …rn. His work was to be preparatory—…o make ready a people for the Lord" …17). He was to "go before Him in …e spirit and power of Elias," that is …Elijah. Now Elijah appeared in the …tory of Israel at a time when the peo…, under Ahab and Jezebel, had sunk …to the most debasing idolatry. They …ad turned their backs upon God, and …lijah was sent to declare His vengeance against their sin. After him came Elisha. Their names were very significant of the work each had to perform, "EL-I-JAH" signifying The Almighty God, and "EL-I-SHA" the Salvation of God. Every act of Elijah, except one, set forth God's wrath. Every act of Elisha, except one, set forth God's grace. But Elijah came before Elisha. His one great mission was to declare the Law of God and to bring the people to repentance.

This was John's work as the forerunner of Jesus. He was to do it with all the boldness and energy of Elijah. He was to be filled with the Holy Ghost from his very birth, that he might awaken the people to attend to Him who should come after him.

THE PLACE.—With these facts before us it is not difficult to see the place John's ministry occupies in the great plan of redemption. As we saw in our Christmas Lesson, "the second Adam," the Lord Jesus Christ, came to restore to sinful man all that he had lost in "the first Adam." But, whilst He came to save all men, and died that all men might be saved, it is manifest that all men are not saved. There must of necessity be some step taken by the man, who stands before God and His Law, by nature in "the first Adam," before he can stand there by grace in "the second Adam." He must pass by some means from one standing to the other. As long as he has no consciousness that he is a sinner, and is satisfied with his condition, or standing, in Adam he must lie under the condemnation of the Law, and "the righteous judgment of God." (Rom. 2: 5.) For "by the offence of one—the first man, of the earth, earthy—judgment came upon all men to condemnation." (Rom. 5: 18.)

But when, by the grace of God, he awakes, and cries in true penitence, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," then by faith, laying hold upon Christ and His redemption, he passes from death unto life, and shall no more come into condemnation. (John 5: 24.) For without repentance there is no remission. This was John's work, to call men to repentance, that he might prepare the way of the Lord. Hence the force of St. Paul's argument in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, as brought before us last week—God according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus, when John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. (Acts 16: 23, 24.) Hence, also, we read that Jesus was exalted "to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5: 31)—first repentance, then forgiveness. Hence, also, in our Review of last week we saw that in the time of the Judges, it was only when the people repented that they were delivered—they went up to Bochim to weep, before they raised their Eben-ezer with praise.

This is the Divine order in all the Scriptures. First the Law, then the Gospel. First Elijah, then Elisha. First John, then Jesus. First repentance, then remission. No remission of sin without repentance for sin.

BRYN MAWR, Penn.

Nay, speak no ill; a kindly word,
Can never leave a sting behind;
And, oh, to breathe each tale we've heard,
Is far beneath a noble mind;
For oft a better seed is sown
By choosing thus a kinder plan;
For if but little good we know,
Let's speak of all the good we can.

PRAYER FOR RAIN ANSWERED.

A FRIEND residing at Glen Innes, N. S. W., writing to his relatives in this country on Oct. 7, says:

I am thankful to say that the drought has broken up at last. The dry weather has played fearful havoc. New England has suffered least of all; still the losses here among sheep, cattle, and horses has been very serious. A neighbor of mine who had fifty head of cattle now has nine; the others have perished from want of grass and water. The creeks are lined with dead cattle and sheep; the unfortunate brutes, weak from want of grass, get bogged while drinking, and, unable to get out, soon perish. Feeding was impossible, as feed could not be bought except at famine prices, and few people had money sufficient to buy food to keep a few alive. Miles and miles of country have been burned as black as possible, nothing escaping the onward march of the flames, and high winds have prevailed without stoppage for the past three weeks. It is estimated that the colony has lost twenty million sheep; cattle in an unknown quantity as yet. As far as I am personally concerned I have been fortunate. I kept what hay and ensilage I had, with a view to selling later when prices would advance, but I have been forced to feed it all away to stock. I keep nine horses here, and have not lost one. I have lost two good cows and three young ones; the rest are all right.

Sunday last, by order of the acting Governor-General, was set apart as a day of prayer for rain. According to the astronomers, there was not a cloud to be seen in any of the Australian colonies, and no rain had fallen for months. In twenty-four hours rain was falling all over the colonies, and during the last week we have had over three inches. What a change! Everyone has a smile now; grass is growing fast, and in another three weeks there will be full and plenty. Sunday next is thanksgiving day for the late rains. People were beginning to think there would be no harvest this year; but there is every prospect of an abundant harvest, thank God.—London Christian.

IN A FISHERMAN'S HOME.

IN the extreme northeast of Scotland is a picture of our Saviour, and the fisherman thus tells its story:

"I was 'way down with the drink," he said, "when one night I went into a 'public,' and there hung His picture. I was sober then, and I said to the bartender: 'Sell me that picture; this is no place for the Saviour.' I gave him all the money I had for it and took it home. Then as I looked at it the words of my mother came back to me. I dropped on my knees and cried, 'O Lord Jesus, will you pick me up again and take me out of all my sin?'

No such prayer is ever unanswered. To-day that fisherman is the grandest man in that little Scottish village. He was asked if he had no struggle to give up liquor. Such a look of exultation came over his face as he answered;

"When such a Saviour comes into the heart, He takes the love of drink right out of it.—National Temperance Advocate.

DAILY BREAD.

SABBATH.

Fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart. 1 Samuel 12: 24.

In Thy love confiding
I will seek Thy face;
Worship and adore Thee,
For Thy wondrous grace.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy. Psalm 33: 18.

MONDAY.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me, and answer me. Psalm 27: 7.

O Thou that hearest prayer,
Attend our humble cry,
And let Thy servants share
Thy blessing from on high.

God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth John 9: 31.

TUESDAY.

I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Psalm 51: 3.

Prostrate I'll lie before His throne,
And there my guilt confess;
I'll tell Him, I'm a wretch undone
Without His sovereign grace.

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Proverbs 28: 13.

WEDNESDAY.

Cast not away * * * your confidence. He brews 10: 35.

Jesus hath died for you!
What can His love withstand?
Believe, hold fast your shield, and who
Shall pluck you from His hand?

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Hebrews 3: 14.

THURSDAY.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom. Colossians 3: 16.

Let Thy eternal truths, we pray,
Dwell richly in each heart;
That from the safe and narrow way
We never may depart.

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. John 15: 7.

FRIDAY.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Exodus 20: 8.

In holy duties, let the day,
In holy pleasures, pass away;
How sweet a Sabbath thus to spend,
In hope of one that ne'er shall end.

Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. Ezekiel 20: 20.

SATURDAY.

Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. 1 Thessalonians 4: 9.

Let love, in one delightful stream,
Through every bosom flow,
And union sweet and dear esteem
In every action glow.

He that loveth his brother abideth in the light. 1 John 2: 10.

Sabbath Reading.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

Please do not send us contributions of any kind for SABBATH READING, as the Editor has not time to examine them and cannot attend to the return of manuscripts.

"AS YESTERDAY WHEN IT IS PAST."

How long time seems when one is suffering, or when anxiously waiting for some person! But how short yesterday seems: how very short the past year! And how shorter still the years of long ago; which have passed into oblivion, one and all, with the exception of a stray reminiscence here and there. Some thoughts, some words, some deeds, some acts, which impressed us strongly at the time and were therefore recorded with special clearness on the pages of our memory—these remain, but all the rest has passed from our recollection.

"A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past," sang Moses; "and as a watch in the night." And it is not very difficult to imagine that a time may come when, even to us, the whole term of our natural lives here will seem but a brief moment of our existence. Indeed, it is possible by faith to get hold of the power of that truth now.

Paul was sustained by this thought amid all his grievous trials and sufferings, and from out of the midst of his own sore afflictions he sends it out as a note of consolation to others. Read the account of his sufferings for Christ's sake in 2 Cor. 4: 8–10 and 11: 23–31, and then read Chap. 4: 17, 18 and see how Paul triumphed over affliction by recognizing its true place in the economy of of God's grace and its true proportion, both as to severity and as to duration, with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory for which it is designed to prepare us.

But it is not only in regard to suffering that our lives will soon be "as yesterday when it is past." All our opportunities for service and for laying up treasure in Heaven are passing away, oh, so rapidly. And oh, how trifling the interests which have prevented us from seizing these opportunities will appear when we look back upon it all from the other shore!

"As yesterday when it is past."—

The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months;
The months will add themselves and make the years;
The years will roll into the centuries,
"And"—then, what?

Mine will ever be a name of scorn.

Such is the poet's ending to this sentence. Shall it be true of any of us? When our brief day of life has become yesterday, shall the net result of our lives be a title to perpetual scorn; and not to be scorned by others only, but by ourselves also?

The heavenly visitor who came to make Daniel understand what should befall his people in the latter days concluded his prophecy with an awful warning and a glorious promise:

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and SOME TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

What shall our record be when that day comes?

We cannot mend the past of our lives, but how about the future live through it, be like those that have. Shall next year, if we are permitted to preceded it? Or, will we now, to-day, begin to live a new life, inspired by a consciousness of the presence of Christ, and regulated by the thought of God's claims upon us?

"WHAT A WORD IS THIS!"

LUKE 4: 36.

Nothing but thankfulness is in our hearts this morning, regarding SABBATH READING, and in this, the last issue of 1895, we want to sound a note of gladness—praise to God who has honored our work and thankfulness to those friends who, during the year, have labored with us. The last number of SABBATH READING for 1894 consisted of 47,000 copies, while for the concluding issue of 1895 the number of copies printed is 65,000. Praise the Lord! May His blessing rest on every reader.

As far as He may permit us to carry on this work in 1896 we shall continue it on the same lines as heretofore. What better lines could we choose than are expressed in the motto of SABBATH READING "DETERMINED NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING AMONG YOU SAVE JESUS CHRIST!" As in the past SABBATH READING will know no politics and no sectarianism, but will seek to present Gospel truth, the Word, in many and simple forms, if so be that men, women and children may be brought to know God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.

We ask for the earnest, effectual prayers of all our readers that we may have Divine guidance as to what to say, how to say it, and what to choose in presenting the thoughts of others, so that the effect of all our doing and thinking may be "that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified."

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

THE Domination of Thought—Such as are thy habitual thoughts, such also will be the character of thy mind; for the soul is dyed by the thoughts. Dye it, then, with a continuous series of such thoughts as these: for instance, that where a man can live, there he can also live well.—Marcus Antoninus

CONQUERING TEMPTATI

BY HOWARD AGNEW J

Some years ago a youn
Iowa was settled in a co
Before he entered the min
been addicted to the habit of
at times the old thirst would c
him with terrific intensity. H
cessfully overcome the tem
some years, but the day came
experienced the fiercest strug
life. It was a Winter day, and
compelled to drive some distance
load of wood. The road led by a cross
roads tavern, and as he drove by the old
desire to drink came upon him stronger
than he had known it for years. Alarmed
at his condition, he whipped up his horses
and hurried past the place of temptation. But all the way he realized that
on his return he could not drive rapidly
by the tavern, and he trembled like a
bird fascinated by the eye of a serpent,
as he thought of the temptation that
would surge over his soul to stop and
drink.

As he returned with his load of wood he tried to put the temptation away. He thought of the shame which would be brought upon his family, upon the church over which he was stationed, and of the terrible blow which the cause of Christ would receive because of his sin; but it seemed that his will was gone, and he felt that he could not resist this frightful temptation. The tavern came into view, and trembling from head to foot, he stopped his horses, hesitating as to his course. Suddenly the thought came to him: "Why are you not praying about this? You have told your people that prayer in the hour of temptation would help them. Try it on yourself." It was the voice of the Spirit to his soul. He turned his horses into the woods by the roadside, and flung himself down upon the ground, praying as he never prayed before for the help of God to conquer this temptation.

It was the crisis hour of his life, and he felt it. The conviction that his soul was trembling in the balance was strong. He believed that if he yielded then, he was a lost man. He prayed in an agony of earnest intensity, such as he had never known before. For almost an hour he plead for help, plead as Jacob at Peniel, and would not let go his only source of help until the blessing came. At last he felt a sense of peace and victory. He rose from the ground a new man. The temptation was gone. He drove home, realizing that he had never appreciated that kind of prayer which will win the victory against temptation. From that day he has never had the desire to drink again. His victory was complete.

It may be so with every young man in every kind of temptation. Most of us know very little about that quality of prayer which agonizes before God, with the strong conviction that the eternal destiny of the soul is trembling in the balance. If we go with Christ into Gethsemane, praying until our hearts break with the intensity of our soul's pleading, only one result will come of it all, and that will be the victory over the temptation that would drag us down. The Word of God is sure: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it."—Young Men's Era

Sense Talks
UNG MEN

...e R. Scott

...the young men appreciate ...f time there would be a ...rovement in the condition of ...n.

...realize the number of hours ...nave wasted and what they ...d have added to our general stock ...f knowledge and of good work accomplished, if they had been wisely used, it seems to me that there would be more effort made to take advantage of the fleeting minutes.

Some young men seem to think that inspiration will bring to them the knowledge necessary to efficiency when it is needed; but inspiration will do nothing of the kind, it will only help to bring forth at the proper time what has been put carefully away in memory's cells.

God gives us opportunities, and rewards us for using them aright by giving us increased powers; but if our opportunities are neglected nothing will happen to make up the deficiency.

I cannot urge too strongly that young men get not only good hearts but good heads while youth is on their side. The deficiencies of early days generally become even more marked as the years pass by. What we are as boys we generally continue to be as men. Of course there are exceptions.

Life is so short and time so precious, and the hours we waste in the frivolities of life cost us so much in our old age, that we cannot afford to waste what it will never again be our fortune to have.

A young man who, in the days of his youth, feels contented to know nothing, see nothing, do nothing, will grow up to be an empty piece of humanity, and the brains in his head will rattle whenever he is struck by adverse circumstances.

As far as that which is good and useful is concerned, a young man's heart and head should be like a sponge—an absorber. Take in that which tends to give wisdom and that which helps to make character. First receive Jesus into your heart, and then it will be ready to take in all the other good things.

Youth is the season of life to take advantage of time. It is more easy to study and commit to memory when you are between ten and twenty-five years of age than at any other time I know that from experience; and almost every old gentleman will back up my experience.

One hour a day for a year spent in downright hard study of history or biography will give you a fund of information and anecdotes that will help you exceedingly if you ever become a public man. I would not sell (if I could) what my eyes saw and my ears heard in my younger days for a brown stone front in the city of New York.

Not only improve the time by reading but also by close observation and deep thinking. Whenever I see, hear, or read anything that strikes me as interesting I pack it away in memory's chamber, and it never fails to come handy when wanted—either in speaking or writing.

The head is a wonderful thing if properly filled. No wonder some people call it "knowledge box." It should be, and is not worth much if it is not.

I asked an old lady on the other side of the ocean, forty-eight years ago, if she had enough to do to keep busy. She replied that every hour of her spare time was spent in polishing her heart and head. Good old lady she was, for she could talk by the hour, and say something when she opened her mouth. The boys and girls who spent even a few minutes in her company, when they left her presence were better and wiser. And she made no charges.

I presume the wish of every thoughtful man and woman is, that he or she had made more use of the time wasted in early life. But now it is even a waste of time to think over the matter.

I once asked a very rich man how he managed to make so much money in his early days. "Watched the clock" was his answer. He did so so as not to let time get ahead of him. His object was the acquiring of wealth; but he made two bad mistakes, he neglected the cultivation of his heart and head, and his tongue told the story almost every time he opened his mouth.

Young men, start the New Year with the determination to make the best of the time allotted to you. Show your parents that you know enough to be a credit to them. Do not live a life of idleness, but work "while the day lasts" with your heads, your hands and your hearts.

The Enemies of the Home.

BY THE REV. THEODORE CUYLER.

TO have such a home [an attractive home] you must make it. To keep it what it ought to be, you must set your face against the many enemies to a pure and happy home. One of these is the club-house, which is becoming an increasingly and dangerously popular institution in our land. There are some exceptional specimens, but in the great majority of clubs, wine bottles, cigars, cards and convivial suppers are too prominent attractions. A friend of mine who lived opposite to a club-house of rather high social grade, told me that it made him heart-sick to see the number of gentlemen who made it their constant evening resort, and the late hours at which all the windows were in full blaze. According to the official report of that club, several thousands of dollars were spent annually on intoxicating drinks.

Whatever may be said for those unfortunates who have no home or household, yet a club is no place for a man of family. It is the rival and often the fatal antagonist of his home. Every sensible wife hates the very name of "club," and is jealous of such a rival with a righteous jealousy. She has a right, as a true, loving wife, to her husband's evening hours, and the children have a right to their father's sympathetic attentions; if the club robs them, it is the enemy of their home. I sometimes think that if an indignant uprising of neglected wives could make a clean conflagration of most of the club-houses and drinking haunts, it would be an exercise of "women's rights" that ought not to provoke the interference of the fire department.

It goes without saying that the saloon is a most deadly enemy of the home; the more it is decorated, the more dangerous. To multitudes of our young men, and to a vast number of the humbler laboring classes, the saloon becomes a chandeliered and crimsoned gateway to hell! But all the drinking habits are not formed in the dram-shop or the billiard-room or the club-house. A vast many take their first drink at their parents' table or at social parties in private houses.

I once officiated at a wedding where there was a popping of champagne corks like a discharge of musketry. Not long afterward I was called on to labor for the reformation of a drunken son in that very family. His parents had been his tempters. The father who puts a wine bottle on his table and the lady of the house who provides—from false slavery to fashion—intoxicating beverages for her guests are playing with fire. If anyone forms the drinking habit or is strengthened in such habit through their temptation, they are before God responsible for the fatal mischief wrought. As the total abstinence societies have declined and pledges to abstain have been too much abandoned, there is a perceptible increase of social drinking. Liquor on the table or the side-board is often the first step to liquor in the club or the saloon or the restaurant. A family teetotal pledge hung on the wall would be about the most ornamental piece of furniture in many a dwelling.

The enemies of which I have spoken are outside of our doors; but very often a man's foes, and sometimes a wife's foes, are "they of his or her own household." Where do most men find their greatest help or their greatest hindrance to success in their business? I confidently answer—at home. Good management and frugality there are apt to mean prosperity. Extravagance there means vexation, temptation to recklessness and business gambling and eventual ruin. Half the married men who practice swindling are pushed on to it by a wicked mistress or an extravagant wife and family. A wife is the best of friends or the worst of enemies.

When husband and wife make common cause in enthroning Christ over their household, and in barring out the enemies that threaten the peace and purity of their home, then domestic life becomes as sweet as a song and as holy as a sacrament. In such a home the Christmas candles burn all the year round, and the "church in the house" becomes a prelude to the great family circle of the redeemed in Heaven.—Condensed from Christian Intelligencer.

"SOME white folks seems ter 'magine," said Uncle Eben, "dat dey is so much bettah'n other people dat dar ain' no necessity foh 'em ter show it by dar actions."—Washington Star.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For Sabbath Reading.

WORK AMONG FALLEN WOMEN.

THE Florence Mission in Bleecker street, of which there are now twenty-one branches in the United States was established by Mr. Charles N. Crittenton the well known wholesale druggist in New York city, and is still supported by him. In 1882 his little four-year-old daughter Florence died, and the idea of a memorial mission for girls was impressed upon the heart of the bereaved father. A mission whose doors would never be closed; and whose aim it should be to reclaim the lost girls of New York.

Mr. Crittenton leased the three story building in Bleecker street, and called it the Florence Mission. This house has become "the very gate of Heaven" to many a poor soul which had lost itself through wandering in forbidden paths.

The mission gave a welcome shelter to all who came and its reputation spread rapidly. Meetings are held every night beginning with song service at half-past eight and lasting into the early hours of the morning. The workers sit on the platform, while on one side of the room are the girls who are staying in the home, and on the other are the girls who have strayed into meeting from the streets attracted by the singing. The back of the room is generally filled with men, who want help of some sort, or who come out of curiosity.

While the meeting is in progress outside workers go from place to place seeking for the class of women whom the mission wishes to help, and putting in their hands a card which says:

"Any mother's girl wishing to leave a crooked life may find friends, food, shelter and a Helping Hand to a better life, by coming just as she is, at any time, to the Florence Night Mission."

As the girls come in the superintendent, Mrs. Prindle, goes to each one giving them a kindly welcome, and through her loving words and hearty hand-shake many of the girls have been induced to remain in the home.

At a recent meeting, under the leadership of Mr. Brower, very interesting testimonials were given by the girls. After each testimony an appropriate verse of a hymn was sung. The first one to speak was a young woman, now one of the matrons in the mission. She said:

"I thank God that I am saved and that I have the sunlight of Jesus' love in my heart. It is eight years and a half since I turned my back on the Devil and gave my heart to Jesus in this blessed mission. I have found God as good as His word. The first year I began to serve Him I was like a little child learning to walk. I would take a few steps, then stumble, and often fall. But each time my loving Father picked me up, and now He holds my hand as I walk along. Oh, I am so glad that I took Him for my Saviour. If you are living straight you needn't be afraid that people will talk about you. I used to seek for my pleasures in theatres and balls, but I thank God He took all that out of me, and now I find all my pleasure in Him. I ask you to pray for me that I may ever continue faithful."

Grace there is my every debt to pay,
Blood to wash my every stain away.
Power to keep me spotless day by day,
In Thee, O Lord.

After this verse had been sung the inmates of the home gave their testimonies:

"I'm a child of the King to-day, and how I thank God for it! I was honest when I came to this mission two years and seven months ago, and I gave my heart to God honest. I ask an interest in your prayers."

"I love Jesus and I can say every day, I'm nearer my God to Thee."

I'm satisfied with Jesus here,
He's everything to me;
His dying love has won my heart
And now He sets me free.

"I want less of self and more of Christ. I was under the bondage of intemperance, but God be praised, He has set me free. I want to learn to submit my will to Christ's and have His life shine in me. Oh, my heart is filled with His love."

Jesus is strong to deliver,
Mighty to save, mighty to save.
Jesus is strong to deliver,
Jesus is mighty to save.

"Yes, Jesus, is mighty to save. Yes, He is strong to deliver. I never can thank Him enough. I can't find words to express my gratitude to Him. Everybody pray for me."

"I am ever so glad that I can say that I have found Jesus to be a true friend. One to stand by you in all your trouble."

"I found Jesus one year ago. He is now my blessed Saviour. It is so sweet to know that He is able to take care of us, and guard us, and guide us. Pray for me, that I may come closer yet to Him."

The blood has always precious been,
'Tis precious now to me;
Through it alone my soul has rest,
From fear and doubt set free.

"I am so thankful that I gave my heart to Jesus. Pray for me."

"When we give our hearts to Jesus we think we're doing a wonderful thing in taking them. It's two years ago since I took Him to be my Master."

"Jesus keeps me sweetly day by day, and I ask your prayers that He will continue to do so."

We praise Thee, O God! for the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died and is now gone above.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory. Hallelujah! amen.
Hallelujah! Thine the glory; revive us again.

A man spoke next, He said: "Back in Abraham's time, God promised that He would multiply his seed as the stars of Heaven. A few years ago, a lot of astronomers got together and began to number the stars, and they meant to use their knowledge to refute God's Word. But just when they got everything nicely settled, more powerful telescopes were brought into use, and billions of stars appeared in the milky way, and they couldn't even begin to count them. When God says a thing He means it, and when we serve Him He multiplies our mercies like the stars; we can't begin to count them. I used to be a gambler, and go out at night and spend all my money at the faro tables, and though I made plenty of it, I never had a cent in my pocket. I thank God that He converted me, and that I am redeemed by His precious blood."

Trust and obey,
For there's no other way,
To be happy in Jesus,
But to trust and obey.

An old man testified: "Fifty years I served the Devil, but, been serving Him now and by His grace I mea til I reach my heavenly n

A young man said: "T came to this city. Like son, I started on my wicke in life. I heard about the Jesus, and I said, 'I'll make of it.' Well, I did, praise His now I have the best of frien best of positions, and I'm tr every day."

Simply trusting every da
Trusting thro' a stormy w
Even when my faith is sma
Trusting Jesus, that is all.

Later on in the night, after an effe has been made by short addresses and earnest prayers to touch their hearts, the girls are invited to the inquiry-room, where Christian workers talk with them and listen to the stories of their ruined lives and their bitter struggles for existence. And when they have told all, they are prayed with and pointed to the Saviour.

Those who wish remain in the mission all night, and as long as they choose. Instruction is given in useful work, and positions are obtained for the deserving ones.

COURAGEOUS CHINESE EVANGELISTS.

AT the beginning of this year the Committee of the Central China Religious Tract Society organized a new branch of their work, viz., a colportage department. God had been preparing the hearts of a few for this enterprise, and in March four suitable men began work. One of the four engaged is a member of the Wesleyan mission, the others are members of the London mission in Hankow.

All these men have thus far justified their appointment. They are all good men, and two of them have had an interesting history. Chen Chuin San, a tall strong man, was formerly a bad character, and a bitter persecutor of Christians. To the Christian members of his own family he was a constant foe. On one occasion, in his native village, he attacked his cousin—a man of sterling Christian character—so violently that, but for the interference of bystanders, he would have beaten him almost to death. Many a time since Chuin San himself became a Christian he has caused surprise to the neighbors—who in old days used to go in fear of him—by his meekness under persecution.

As a Christian, he has often been beaten by the heathen. On one occasion he visited a market town to preach the Gospel and sell books when the people gathered against him, beat him, and cast him out of the place, with the threat that if he ever returned for the purpose of preaching they would "gouge out his eyes." "Well," was his reply, "I shall be here again to-morrow." And so he was. They did not carry out their terrible threat on that day, but contented themselves with giving him another beating, and renewed the threat. The next morning the sturdy fellow was there again, and so he continued to go, patiently enduring daily persecution, until at last, by his continued going, he wearied them, and succeeded in winning a hearing for his message.

Peng Lan Seng, a native of Hunan, is a man of strong character and thoroughly original. He not only has ideas about things in general, which are decidedly characteristic, but he does not hesitate to carry these ideas into practice. Until his conversion to God, a few years ago

…sly bad man, and was …such both in Hankow …a, his native city. He …ence of the power of the …ge the hearts of even the …his constant testimony to …od in saving so great a sin… …iniquity, is always power… …incing. He is absolutely …oclaiming the Gospel.

…since Peng's brother died, …grief of Peng himself and …other. At once Peng deter… …eize the opportunity to prove …hen the utter falsity of all …ors about the evil doings of …ers and native Christians. The …e—even the enlightened ones—be… …e that the most potent medicines in …our pharmacopœia are compounded of …the eyes, hearts, brains, etc., of human beings. The demand for these precious drugs leads, it is supposed, not only to the desecration of the dead, but also to the injury of the living. Outside the Christian church there are comparatively few Chinese who do not believe these stories to be literally true. Peng resolved that no such stories should be circulated about his brother. He announced all through the neighborhood that his deceased brother would be placed in the coffin in the presence of all who cared to witness the ceremony. At the time appointed a large crowd gathered, which listened attentively to part of the Burial Service read in the courtyard. Then four Hunanese acquaintances, all heathen, undertook to examine the body, to place it reverently in the coffin, and to fasten the lid down with the cement usually employed, and also to make it more secure by driving in a number of huge nails provided for the purpose. While this was going on Peng and his friends left the house, and went away to a distance, returning only when all was finished. It required great moral courage to carry out this programme, but Peng did not flinch, and his bold action has, probably, done more good than a thousand proclamations and assurances that such rumors are false. For some days Peng's doings were the talk of all that part of Hankow.

Fung Ta Shien and Tan Shioh San are the other two members of the band of colporteurs.

In appointing these brethren it was felt that, all of them being capable preachers and experienced Christian men, they might in their journeyings render a service of immense value to the Christian church in Central China, and of scarcely secondary importance to their main work. A large number of converts of the various missions return to their homes in distant places where they are surrounded by many temptations, and where, moreover, they are cut off from Christian fellowship. Christians so circumstanced have been lost sight of for months and even years, and although many have continued steadfast in the faith, notwithstanding the terrible isolation, while some have drawn their friends about them and are already forming little Christian communities in the midst of heathen neighbors, it has long been felt that these Christians should, from time to time, be visited and encouraged.

During the past three months our four colporteurs have cheered the hearts of lonely Christians in many places by their unexpected visits. They must have done much good. In one of their earlier journeys two of the colporteurs were overtaken by a heavy snowstorm in Mien Yang. After much fruitless wandering they managed to reach the house of a Christian family, where they received a hearty welcome. They were kept prisoners for several days, and most of this time was spent in Bible study with the Christians, and in teaching more than twenty of the heathen neighbors the Word of Life. This Christian family, living in the midst of heathen, is a continual testimony to the value of medical missionary work. Five members of the family have successively suffered from cataract, and have all been successfully operated on in the London Mission Hospital, Hankow. There is one more who is not yet ready; but when his turn comes we hope that he, too, will be able to testify, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

Six months before this visit a daughter of the family had left her home to become the wife of the young man to whom she was betrothed by her parents in early childhood. It was stipulated before the marriage that she should be free to profess Christianity; yet no sooner had the young bride become an inmate in the family home of her husband, and had manifested her intention of not worshiping idols, than her father-in-law and her husband began to beat her. This they continued to do whenever she knelt to pray to God. Many Christians, more highly favored, find no necessity for such an added temptation to laxity in the habit of prayer. This poor girl stood to her colors bravely, and continued her praying. The colporteurs paid a visit to the family, and we have since learned that there had been no further persecution This was a most useful service to the whole family, and especially to the young disciple of Christ in her time of trial.

A day or two later, the brethren unexpectedly lighted upon a man who became a Christian eight years ago, and who had not been heard of for some time. Although in great distress, his house having been lately burnt to the ground, he and all his family were bright, and the neighbors spoke highly of his character.

It would be easy to multiply instances of this kind, for our four brethren return to us full of such interesting facts as have been given. Many who had heard the Gospel in Hankow, at one or other of the chapels where daily preaching is carried on, or at one of the hospitals, were met with, and others were visited in their homes. In the inns where they sojourned, on boats, and by the wayside, they constantly met with those who had become interested in the Truth in Hankow, to whom, in many cases, they taught the Word more fully.

As a contrast to this, two brethren lately traveled to the north of this province, through a well-populated district, visiting on their way twenty-eight market towns and cities, during which journey they did not meet with a single Christian. These great stretches of darkness made us realize how much land has still to be possessed.

One interesting fact which came to light was that all along the route their books were well known—at least, the titles were—a large number of the people already possessing one or more copies, which they brought out triumphantly to exhibit. A few had gathered a general idea of the main teachings of Christianity. Such testimony is valuable in many ways. It proves that tract distribution does really succeed in getting Christian books into the hands of the people, and that the books are mostly preserved; and, best of all, it shows that there is ground for earnest prayer on the part of all Christians that God would bless the seed which has already been so widely scattered.

Early in March Peng Lang Seng and Tan Shioh San started off on a journey to Chang Sha, the capital of the Province of Hunan. They were fully aware of the great risk they ran in attempting to distribute their books in that bitterly anti-foreign centre. After a protracted journey they reached their destination, and after reconnoitering and making inquiries for a couple of days, they boldly sallied forth on the third day to commence the attack. Providentially it rained, and as they passed from house to house so well screened were they by their large umbrellas that they attracted very little attention. Ten days—anxious, worrying days they must have been—were spent in this house-to-house work, in which they managed to sell at least one book at eight out of every ten houses—a splendid feat of bookselling anywhere, and especially so in Chang Sha.

Peng, being a native of Chang Sha, has many friends there, some in good positions, through whom he and his colleague were introduced to several leaders of society, and were entertained at a feast on more than one occasion.

On the eleventh day the boldest step of all was taken. These two daring fellows started out armed with handsome packets of Christian books, suitably inscribed, and with the visiting cards of Dr. Griffith John and myself, and made their way to the yamen of the governor of the province. They respectfully presented a packet of books and the cards, but the books were declined with thanks. From there they went to a number of the other yamens, and disposed of packets of books to eighteen of the high officials and leading gentry. This was literally going into the lion's den; and, but for their openness and courage, these men would certainly have been seized and beaten, if not worse. The strain upon their nerves was intense, but they got through capitally. Both men showed great courage in carrying out this plan of attack, which was due to Peng.

Three days after they left, the city was in a tremendous uproar. It was discovered early one morning that the principal god of the city temple had been smashed and the eyes dug out with a sharp instrument. Other idols had also been mutilated, and great was the popular indignation. Just before the close of the late war a special commissioner of high rank was sent from Pekin to seek the good help of this god against the Japanese. It will thus be seen that it was a terrific blow against idolatry which struck out the eyes of this noted idol. Who could have committed this crime? For a few days Chang Sha was in a storm of excitement and passion. The thirty or more priests in charge of the temple were arrested and thrown into prison for not taking better care of their idol, although they protested that the damage was inflicted at night, "while they slept," by supernatural and demoniac agency.

The mystery was deepened by the fact that robbery was evidently not the motive. In Hunan the people believe more strongly in their idols than is the case in other parts of China, and they prove their faith by their works. The temples of Hunan are richer and the images are more beautifully decorated than elsewhere. The injured idol is very richly adorned, while in addition he carries a large amount of wealth in what may be called by courtesy his inner man, a feat

which would be beyond the power of human millionaires. The interior treasury of this god contained much silver and gold and two pearls of priceless value, so it is said. These treasures were not disturbed by the mysterious inconoclast, nor were the rich adornments carried away.

What, then, could have been the motive? That still remains to all of us a mystery. It is said that a man, who was stated to have been mad, confessed to having done the deed, his professed object being to remove the chief obstacle in the way of foreigners coming to settle in Hunan, and for his work he hoped to receive a large reward from them. It seems that this idol is the guardian of Hunan against the incursions of barbarians, so this method was employed in order to divest him of his power. Once the power of this idol was broken, foreigners could go and come in Hunan as they pleased.

It was evidently a deep-laid scheme to rouse popular hatred once more against foreigners, and was probably part of a still wider scheme. The man who confessed to the deed, a leather-seller, gave the names of numerous members of his guild as accomplices and principals. These unfortunate, and probably innocent, men have been shamefully ill-used and almost ruined. A good deal is accounted for by the fact that the man who confessed lives in the vicinity of Chou Han, the famous (or infamous) author of the anti-foreign literature, to which most of the riots and troubles of late can be traced. It seemed possible that in connection with the treaty of peace Hunan would be opened up; the literature was almost played out, hence this new scheme. It is the old story over again. The duplicity and falsity of the Chinese official classes is the root from which all these things spring. BUT A TERRIBLE DAY OF RECKONING MUST COME BEFORE LONG.

A determined effort was made to drag Christians into the business so as to lay the blame on them. A leather-seller in Hankow, well-known in Chang Sha, was supposed to be a Christian, and a warrant was issued by the authorities for his arrest. He escaped, but his cousin was taken and imprisoned as a surety. The former, Wei Teh Ming, was for years a consistent Christian, but had to be cut off on account of the opium-smoking habit. He has never been in Hunan in his life. Wei Teh Shuin, the cousin, is a Christian in good standing, and when he was thrown into prison without reason, it became possible for us to help. By the good offices of the British Consul he was released, after having passed nearly three weeks in a filthy room, where a number of prisoners were herded together and never allowed to pass the door. Wei spent most of his time in telling the Gospel story to his fellow prisoners, one of whom had bought a New Testament before entering, in order to pass the time.

Wei Teh Ming has come out of his hiding-place, and is in the hospital for the cure of opium: his wife and family are full of joy. Wei Teh Shuin is out of prison, and, on the whole, the kingdom of evil bids fair to lose in this struggle. Through all the strifes and tears of men God's Spirit is working out His high purposes of love. Great are the resources of the enemy, but though he may succeed in keeping God's messengers, for a time, out of various parts of the world, we know that God will soon ratify His gift to His Son of the "heathen for an inheritance."—Arthur Bonsey, in Chronicle of the London Missionary Society.

An Hour with the Bible.

How many of the children can find answers to these questions?

To what place did God send the prophet Samuel to choose a king for Israel to reign after Saul? What was the name of the man to whom Samuel was sent, and how many sons had he? What did Samuel think of the oldest son? What did God say to him? Which of the sons was chosen, and where was he at the time? What wonderful thing did this youngest son do soon afterwards, and who became his great friend? What greater King was born in the same town nearly eleven hundred years afterwards, and what strange beings came to sing a song of joy over His cradle? What sort of a cradle had this baby King?

Inasmuch.

"SO glad to hear that your Frances has a class in Sunday-school. My Christine is beginning to-day. I tell her Frances Endicott can be her model. By the way, as this is Christine's first afternoon, and as she is shy about going alone, could not Frances stop for her? I shall be much obliged. Thank you."

And Mrs. Lawrence, having gained her point, rustled down the aisle, followed by her pretty daughter.

Frances Endicott frowned. "I am to be a social stepping-stone this afternoon, I see," she said. "How that woman does flatter, and push, and use people—even in church."

"Church is just the place where new people get in," sighed Mrs. Endicott. "To get into a good church is half the battle. Mrs. Lawrence is on my altar-cloth committee already. Well, we can avoid them in the aisle after this; but you'll have to call for the girl this afternoon."

Six little girls sat round their new teacher that afternoon, and admired her with childish warmth; they were not genteel children, and did not understand the wheels within wheels of the society machine. To them Miss Lawrence was the prettiest, nicest young lady in the church, and Christine, who had taken the class because the rector was so persuasive, and because she had nothing else to do on Sunday afternoons, felt a glow of virtue as she smiled upon them and answered their questions. The lesson was on Solomon's temple, and they said such quaint things. Janie Knox wanted to know if "a cubit wasn't a kind of tree?" and Maria Laverty asked if "that place was on show anywheres now?" They were really very amusing, these children of the poor, and she felt that virtue is its own reward.

"Ain't she lovely? Them pink flowers was just like her cheeks," said Maria to Janie, after school was dismissed. The two little girls had turned into a street that had seen better days, and from that into a frankly disreputable alley, where dirty children played on the street, and rough looking men and women lounged on the doorsteps, in the warm September sunshine. There are no baby carriages in Sloane's Alley, so the infant population was either crawling about on the stones or held by slatter
sisters in the doorways.
dog was nosing the refus
From one of the houses
high quarrel, and a girl
an empty kettle in her hand
she disappeared around the
"I guess your aunt is in t
Cullough's," said Janie. As
the noise of battle rose higher
of people came out of the door
a young, evil-looking fello
something in his pocket as he
a middle-aged looking woman,
cated that she staggered wide
pursued him; then two brut
men and a younger woman, with
toddling behind her. These last
paused on the steps.

"Say, M'ria, your aunt's lost h
pocketbook," called out one of the men, with a drunken laugh.

"Jim slipped it off her when she was dealin' the cards. He'll end up in jail, a takin his own mother's money," said the woman. She might have moralized further, being half-intoxicated, but the return of the girl with the kettle drew them back into the house, with several curious and thirsty neighbors in addition.

"When I grow up," said Maria, solemnly, "I ain't agoin' never to drink, and I ain't agoin' to get married."

"You don't know nothin' ever, what you're goin' to do," replied Janie. "My mother don't drink, and she says she would rather have her children than live rich and single."

"I don't remember my mother," said Maria. "Perhaps she wanted me when she was alive. But my aunt don't. She beats me. Uncle Jim beats her when he's drunk, and Cousin Jim and Cousin Lucy take her money every chance they get. She's sorry she ever married. She says so."

Christine meanwhile walked home with Frances, and told about her class in the most entertaining way. Indeed, she found the children interesting enough as Sunday after Sunday brought them together. To smile upon the little answering faces, to give one of her flowers to the best scholar in the class, to speak graciously to those who quarreled for the seat next her—all these are natural and easy things, and made them so devoted to her, and so happy in the class, that she felt a glow of charity in doing them. The lessons, too, that season were interesting and easy to teach, and one day when the passage selected was that of Christ blessing the children, Christine spoke impressively of the Master's love for just such little ones as they.

"Does God love every one of us?" said Maria, earnestly leaning over until her warm little breath stirred the pink petals of Miss Lawrence's roses.

"Every one of you," repeated Christine.

"Nobody loves me," said Maria, remembering her aunt and uncle and Jim, and Lucy, and Sloane Alley generally, "and I don't see how God should."

"Oh, Maria," said the pretty teacher, shocked, "you mustn't say that. God loves you, of course. Your mother does, too."

"I ain't got any mother, 'nd there ain't nobody loves me, indeed," persisted Maria with the simplicity of truth, "I wish there was just one."

The lesson ended at that moment, and as the class rummaged for their hymn-books, Christine, moved by the child's forlornness to a real, if cheap, touch of sympathy leaned over and patted her cheek.

aria, you're a dear little

at about that wonderful
igh the hymn. God loved
iss Lawrence said so, and
loved her, too. Those
iful facts shone through
s of Sloane Alley and home
t back to the dismal round of
When she felt hungry and
membered them, and through
ing and quarreling and drunk-
hat went on hourly round her,
nforted her little heart. Jim
her, her uncle beat her, heavy
s laid upon her childish shoul-
through it all she carried that
love and hope toward the next
And Christine had forgotten
fore supper time.

as midwinter now, and the gaie-
re crowding fast. Christine was
y girl, her mother was ambitious,
her father went on making money, and
expecting them to spend it. They were
not entirely at home in society, and she
had wit enough to know it, and self-re-
spect enough to wince under it. Still
though the struggle might be unworthy,
everyone else was doing the same thing.

The rush went on, and she with it, and
when after a week of late hours, Sunday
called an enforced halt, she found her-
self unprepared for Sunday-school. She
was away one, and then two, Sundays at
a time. Janie Knox moved away. Maria
disappeared, too, from the class during
one of these absences, and Christine de-
cided she also must have moved, though
she had sent no word, as Janie did. It
was easier to think so than to hunt her
up. One couldn't stop in the middle of
the season to do that. And another
crowded fortnight passed without re-
membering the child again, until Janie
reappeared one afternoon in the class.

"Maria's awfully sick, Miss Lawrence.
I ain't been down to Sloane's Alley be-
fore since we moved, 'nd she's been sick
all the time. She says she wish't you'd
come to see her. She cried and wanted
to see you awfully bad."

"Of course, I will go," said Christine.
She really thought she would. But she
never remembered it at the right time.
Lent was so early that year, too, that
everything was crowded into the last week
or two, and Miss Lawrence forgot her
promise. On Sunday she did not find the
lesson soothing. It was: "Inasmuch as ye
have not done it unto one of the least of
these." And the "sick—and ye visited
me not," rang uncomfortably in her ears
as she looked at the vacant seat. She
certainly would go on Monday at the
very latest. But some one came to
lunch, and she forgot again, until on
Friday she was startled by a call from
Janie, rather appalled at her own bold-
ness in coming.

"Oh, Miss Lawrence, I saw a girl at
school as says Maria is going to die.
Can't you go to see her before she dies
'cause she's been wanting you so?"

"I'll go this minute, Janie," said Miss
Lawrence. This time she really went.
Sloane Alley was not far away; five
minutes was enough to reach the house.
As she neared the door, young Dr.
Adams came out. Christine had danced
the German with him two nights before—
a brilliant fellow, but one of those dread-
ful agnostics. She had argued with him
once or twice sweetly. It was awkward,
his being Maria's doctor, but she faced it.

"Is Maria very sick, Doctor Adams?
Can I do anything for her? I—I as her
Sunday-school teacher."

"She has talked about you," said the
doctor shortly. "I don't think you can
do anything now. I was called in too
late. She's better out of it, after all."

"Oh, how horrible," said Christine.
The young man looked curiously at her
pretty face.

There are six week days for every Sun-
day among the poor, Miss Lawrence. If
Maria had had one friend—just one—in
the world, she would have had a chance.
But no medicine, no food, not even a kind
word, the only thing left to do was to die
quietly and quickly. She may live an
hour or two—not more."

He raised his hat. Christine turned,
her cheeks burning, and went into the
house. It seemed empty, the fire was
half out in the dirty kitchen, and un-
washed dishes and pans were scattered
over the table. An old settee was heaped
with ragged quilts, and at one end,
propped upon an old coat, she saw Maria's
pinched little face. The child's eyes,
twice as large as in health, fixed them-
selves upon her with a kind of weary
recognition.

"Maria, I am so sorry." Christine
didn't know what to say. "Is there any-
thing you want, Maria?" she went on
uselessly, but ashamed to be silent.

Maria tried to shake her head, but she
was too weak. Then she said something
in a whisper. Christine bent over to
hear what it was.

"You told me God loved me. I wish
'twas so. You said He did, and you did,
but you forgot."

"God loves you, Maria. You must
believe it." Christine was so excited
that her voice trembled. The child kept
her eyes fixed on her face for a moment,
then whispered again, with a great effort,
and very faintly.

"I guess you don't know Him very
well. And so you made a mistake. I
I wish 'twas so."

Maria could not say any more. She
closed her eyes and lay quiet. She was
so very near the end. Christine took
the little cold hand in hers, and cried out
with a great wave of pity and shame fill-
ing her heart.

"God loves you; listen, Maria. God
loved you all the time. I forgot you. I
have been careless and wicked, but He
loves you." The hot drops fell from her
eyes on the little face, but Maria neither
answered nor stirred. She was drifting
far out on the eternal sea, where no hu-
man voice could reach her any more.

That evening Miss Lawrence did not
go to the ball. She shut herself up in her
own room, pleading a headache. It was
a great deal worse than any headache,
the continual feeling of the little hand in
hers, the sound of the faltering childish
voice in her ears. That pitiful unan-
swered cry touched the very deeps of
conscience. "Inasmuch as ye did it
not," the awful words came without ap-
peal, without mercy. Christine was
neither a child nor a hypocrite. She
looked things in the face, and knew her-
self judged.

Our destinies crystalize sometimes
around a single experience. To outsiders
a spiritual crisis is always pale. No one
but the one who struggles in it under-
stands. Why just that one shock should
have set all the right in Christine against
the wrong, in a death struggle, is in God's
story of her, not mine; but it was so, and
she knew it. The victory or defeat of
her whole life hung upon that tremulous
balance. She felt a sense of sharp and
absolute test, of a moment of choice be-
tween the Master and the world, and she
shrunk inconceivably from the decision.
And when, at last, she knelt down like a
little child and cried, "Lord, I will, I
will," it meant, not a passing resolve, but
the surrender of her whole nature.

That was five years ago. A stranger
might see no difference in Christine from
the pretty girl in the same pew at St. Ed-
munds five years ago. But a dozen girls
in her class will tell you that next to
their mothers, she is the best friend they
have, and many sick and lonely children
find her the brightest ray of sunshine
that enters their lives. Indeed, Dr.
Adams has gotten into the habit of bring-
ing his forlorn cases to her for consulta-
tion, as, for that matter, he has gotten
into the habit of bringing everything, him-
self included. And though Christine has
never undertaken an argument with
him, he says she has taught him Chris-
tianity.

Five years ago, but Christine has never
forgotten the touch of Maria's dying
hand, the cry of the childish voice. No
other little heart shall ever hunger if she
can help it, no other little life go out into
darkness, for the very least of these have
become to her the brethren and sisters of
her Master.—Priscilla Leonard, in New
York Observer.

Climbing The Height.

"I REMEMBER," said the old school-
master, "a Summer morning when I
stood in the little square of the town
of Chamouni, where two parties of trav-
elers were preparing for the ascent of Mt.
Blanc. One young Englishman disre-
garded all the directions of the guides,
and loaded himself with things which he
declared were absolutely necessary for
the journey.

"He carried a small case of wine and
delicate food to pamper his appetite; a
camera, with which he proposed to pho-
tograph himself and his companions at
different stages of the ascent; note-books
in which to record his impressions, and
a picturesque plumed cap an' a gay Indian
blanket which he wore to win admiration
from possible beholders of his triumphs.

"The guides after a protest, whispered
together, and allowed him to have his
own way.

"Six hours after his party started ours
followed. At the little chalet where the
first night is spent we found his food and
wine. The guide laughed.

"Herr Englinger has found that he can-
not stop to humor his stomach, if he
would climb Mt. Blanc, he said.

"A few miles farther on we found the
note-books and camera. He had given
up the hope of winning fame by record-
ing his progress in the actual hard strug-
gle of the ascent.

"Still higher he had thrown off the gay
robe and plumed cap.

"We found him at the summit in leath-
er jerkin, exhausted and panting for
breath. He had encountered heavy
storms, and reached the top of the moun-
tain at the risk of his life; but he had
reached it. Clothes, food and the com-
ments of the people below did not come
into his thoughts. He had reacehd the
summit.

"When I was a boy," the schoolmaster
said, suddenly leaning over his desk and
looking at his pupils, "I used to plan
out my life just as he planned his climb.
Fine, fashionable clothes would be a ne-
cessity in it, I felt, and good things to eat,
and plenty of notice and applause from the
public as I marched along, and a record
of my progress to be kept forever by the
world.

"But at forty I cared only for clothes
that kept me warm, and fifty only for
food that kept me strong; and so steep
was the height above me that at sixty I
care little for the opinion of people below

if I could only reach it. And if I ever safely do reach that height, looking upward, I shall not care whether the world keeps any record of my climbing or not, for I shall know that God has it."—Musical Million.

A True Story of a Cat.

BY MARY C. BARTLETT.

"CHILDREN were very different when I was a child," we hear the grown people say, nowadays. Well, maybe so, but I know, in a great many ways, they are just the same as they were when I was a little girl. I am quite sure, for one thing, they are just as fond of true stories as I used to be; and for another thing, I know they are just as fond of cats. Do you know, the other day I passed a little girl sitting sadly on a doorstep with her dead kitten in a white pasteboard box for a coffin, while a friend was helping to deck it for the grave! I knew just how she felt, poor little dear, and couldn't help stopping to have a chat with her about her loss.

I know you will like to hear a very short true story about a cat.

Miss L. has a very intelligent cat for a pet. Miss L. has also a pet canary, and Puss has always taken a great interest in watching her feed the bird, give him his bath, and finally hang the cage on its hook by the window.

"Ana," I hear some of those people say, "watching for a chance to catch and eat the bird!" Just wait and see. One day Puss came trotting up to his mistress in another part of the house, with something in his mouth. She supposed it was a mouse, of course, but what was her horror to find that it was her dear little birdie!

"Oh, you naughty Puss!" she began, but as she took it from him, expecting to find it dead, or at least torn and bleeding—to her great surprise, she found that Puss had carried the bird so carefully and tenderly that there wasn't even a feather turned!

It seems the bottom of the cage, not being properly fastened, had fallen out, bringing birdie down with it, and Puss, seeing something was wrong and that the floor was not the place for a bird, had promptly settled the matter by taking birdie to his mistress to dispose of as she thought best. Wasn't that wonderful for a cat? If it had been a dog no one would have thought so much of it, of course.

Now, whenever you hear anybody running down poor Puss, and saying she has no intelligence, just tell them this little story, will you?—The Churchman.

Maggie's One Blessing.

TEACHER said, in mission school,
we'd oughter be thankful to-day
'cause it's Thankgivin'; but I dunno
what to be thankful for. I can't be
thankful for this cellar to live in, for it's
'most always wet as sop; nor for breakfast, for there watn't any; nor for a father and mother, for they're dead; nor for 'Liza for she's mos' gen'ally off, and beats me when she's here; nor for clothes for there aint enough of 'em to keep me warm; nor feelin' well for my hip ache, so hard—it' most always aches hard nows nor a fire 'cause there aint a bit,—but I'm glad the sun shines to-day, it's so much nicer when the sun—there! the sunshine! there is a blessin', an' I mos' forgot it. Oh, I am thankful for the sunshine to-day!"—Youth's Companion.

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… greater circulation of this pa-
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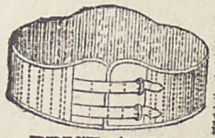

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